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Subject: FORMAT codes and tabs

Posted by [ashmall](#) on Mon, 10 May 1999 07:00:00 GMT

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Dear All,

I'm having trouble reading in a text file with dates and times in the form:

```
11/10/99<tab><sp>16<sp>:<sp>47
```

where <tab> and <sp> represent tabs and spaces.

Sometimes the day/months are consist of only 1 char (e.g. 3/4/99). I can write a separate FORMAT statement for each case but when I try to use I0 to deal with both cases it doesn't work and it seems to be due to the TAB char.

Am I just being foolish or what?

The following short program might hepl explain. I'm using IDL 5.2 under NT4.0.

Cheers,

Justin

```
pro test_read
```

```
;Create a Tab character
```

```
tab = STRING(9B)
```

```
;Create 2 lines of dummy input
```

```
line1 = '10/11/99' + tab + ' 19 : 42'
```

```
line2 = '1/3/99' + tab + ' 19 : 42'
```

```
;This format works for days/months with 2 digits
```

```
READS, line1, FORMAT='(I2,x,I2,x,I2,2x,I2,3x,I2)', dd,mm,yy,hh,mn
```

```
print, dd,mm,yy,hh,mn
```

```
;This format works for days/months with 1 digit
```

```
READS, line2, FORMAT='(I1,x,I1,x,I2,2x,I2,3x,I2)', d,m,yy,hh,mn
```

```
print, d,m,yy,hh,mn
```

```
;How to use the same format code for both line1 and line2?
```

```
;Presumably need to use I0 to automatically adjust to different
```

```
;widths.
```

```
;Just trying to read in the first 3 numbers (the date)
```

```
READS, line1, FORMAT='(I0,x,I0)', dd,mm ;This works
```

```
print, dd,mm
```

```
READS, line1, FORMAT='(I0,x,I0,x,I0)', dd,mm,yy ;This DOESN'T work
```

```
READS, line1, FORMAT='(I0,x,I0,x,I2)', dd,mm,yy ;This DOESN'T work
```

```
;Is there something strange going on with the tab character?
```

end

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